

EXHIBIT 3

HARVARD DIVINITY SCHOOL

HDS News Archive

≡
Menu

[Home](#) > [News](#) > Jim Hackett on Business, Faith, and Education

Jim Hackett on Business, Faith, and Education

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The HDS Office of Admissions recently caught up with one of our master of theological studies degree candidates, Jim Hackett. Known for both his business acumen and for his cheerful and friendly disposition around campus, Jim participated in the [Special Students program](#) and is now an MTS student.

Below, Jim shares his reflections on what his HDS experience has meant to him so far.



Jim Hackett, MTS candidate. / Photo: Bloomberg

HDS Office of Admissions (HDS): Can you tell us a little about your background? You've been in the workforce for a number of years, how have you spent your pre-HDS years?

JH: I was fortunate to be able to spend my career in business, leading several large global enterprises in the energy field. I taught as an adjunct professor at Rice University's graduate school of business, which re-kindled a continuing interest in teaching. I suspect any good person who leads others becomes a teacher, no matter what profession they pursue.

HDS: What brought you to HDS? Did you ever anticipate that you would pursue a degree in theological study?

JH: Since the Air Force Academy, I have had a strong interest in studying comparative theology, but only as an amateur. What brought me to HDS (and formal theological training) were primarily two events: the failure of a major corporation managed by Midwestern Christians like me (i.e. Enron Corp), and the comments from a successful businessman at a Harvard reunion. He told me that he read the Bible every day, but he didn't believe in God. It then struck me that more research and teaching needed to be conducted about integrating spiritual and intellectual values within secular professions.

My mission is to change how we discuss and pursue spiritual values, not just secular ethics. HDS has helped me in many ways in that regard, including with my plans to write a book on faith and leadership, and to teach undergraduates

at the University of Texas about religion, spirituality, and ethics.

HDS: How have others in your field of work reacted to your decision to pursue this degree?

JH: All have admired it. Most business people admire other professions (except, perhaps, politics, at the edge). They don't try to minimize the value of ministry and teaching.

HDS: What HDS course has had the most impact on you? Why?

JH: I have had so many great teachers, but I suppose the first teachers in the program have the best opportunity to make a big impression. I include K. Healan Gaston's class in early American Religions, and Ousmane Kane's class in Islam, Politics, and Modernity in those early mind-expanding classes. Like most HDS professors, their command of the subject matter, organization of the syllabus, choice of readings, and pedagogical method is excellent. Added to that, with Healan, is a passion for clear and inspired writing, which I sorely needed. I have had so many phenomenal teachers here at HDS.

HDS: Has your time at HDS so far influenced your life outside the classroom? How so?

JH: It has. Like many of my classmates, I

have a job while attending school. Like some of my classmates, I am married. Like others, I also have children. HDS has made my social intercourse in all of the arenas in which I am engaged more patient and less judging. My experience at HDS continues to improve my framework for judging (or, more appropriately, resisting too rapid a judgment of) the world around me. I approach social issues more analytically and fairly. I have also made great friendships here at school; that is a huge blessing in life. I have to pinch myself at the end of each semester due to my good fortune in attending HDS. While HDS is rigorous, it is also a special place for reflection, learning, and improving as an individual and a group.

HDS: What advice would you give to students of religious studies? What would you tell them about HDS?

JH: I would just ask them to realize that whatever spark drove them to come to HDS, never forget that life is primarily about action, not contemplation. We must create joy from pain and suffering in the world, which requires action. Even smiling at others each day or engaging them in respectful dialogue can make the world better. We don't have to always do big things in life to change the world. As our fellow alum Ralph Waldo Emerson was claimed to have said in a poem about success, "just making one person's

life breathe easier because you have lived" is a sign of success.

Also, I personally believe that there is too much raw courage in the world, today.

The only courage worth having is informed courage. If something is important to you, please don't learn all there is to learn from TV or the Internet.

Read deeply and ask for different opinions from different sides of an issue. Don't be satisfied with just what sounds good to you. Try to find those that see the world differently. Next, try to work in that field to make your own judgments.

Last, HDS is even more special than I thought when I applied. Its faculty, administrators, and students continue to make it special by bringing diverse talents and views to the table with candor and tolerance. It is a wonderful legacy in which all HDS students get to become a part.

Read more about HDS's students on the [Office of Admission's student blog](#).

See also:

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